

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request that the amendments be entered at least because they do not raise any issues that would require further search or consideration, and because they place the application in condition for allowance.

Claim 1 is currently being amended.

This amendment changes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-3 and 5-22 are now pending in this application, of which claims 1-3 and 5-15 are currently under consideration.

Applicants respectfully request a rejoinder of the non-elected claims upon allowance of the elected claims. Applicants especially note that claims 21 and 22 contain all the limitations of allowable claim 12, and are likewise *prima facie* allowable.

Allowable subject matter

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 12-15 contain allowable subject matter. Applicants note that claims 12 and 15 were rewritten in independent form in the Amendment filed on August 28, 2003, thus placing these claims, and dependent claims 13-14 into *prima facie* condition for allowance.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph

Claims 1-3 and 5-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Claim 1 has been amended to address the issue raised in the rejection, and applicants submit that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph has been overcome.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-3 and 5-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,242,739 to Kronzer et al. (hereafter "Kronzer"). Claims 1-3 and 5-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,087,061 to Hare et al. (hereafter "Hare") as evidenced by Kronzer. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Independent claim-1 has been amended to include the limitations of allowable claim 12, namely to recite that the system further comprises a non-meltable dulling material. Thus, independent claim 1 is likewise allowable over Kronzer and Hare. Claims 2, 3 and 5-11 ultimately depend from claim 1 and are likewise allowable.

Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0471. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0471. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0471.

Respectfully submitted,

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By Thomas G. Bilodeau

FOLEY & LARDNER
Customer Number: 22428



22428

PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Telephone: (202) 672-5414
Facsimile: (202) 672-5399

Thomas G. Bilodeau
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 43,438